

Communication Plan (DRAFT)

Vision

Advance the work and recommendations of the redesign of Washington's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program through strategic communications.

Goals & Objectives

- Establish the authority and credibility of the WorkFirst Reexamination workgroup as they examine the state's TANF program and recommends ways to ensure a financially sustainable system consistent with the priority goals for the program.
- Establish consistent and clear communications during the reexamination period.
- Encourage broad participation by a host of folks.

Strategies

- Develop a comprehensive communications approach to internal and external communications.
- Make the work of the Reexamination workgroup as available as possible, so interested persons and organizations can recognize what the group is accomplishing.
- Create a high level of engagement by offering opportunities for stakeholders to provide input and feel involved during the process.
- Identify and collaborate with partners.

Key Audiences

- **Internal:** Governor, SubCabinet committees, Reexamination Workgroup, WorkFirst partners and staff, Core Staff Team
- **External:** Social services and child care stakeholders, legislators and staff, media, low-income parents, community partners, tribal governments

WorkFirst is a partnership of four state agencies:

- Department of Social and Health Services
- Employment Security Department
- State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
- Office of Trade and Economic Development

In addition, WorkFirst is a network of 32 local partnerships that include tribes, community organizations, community and technical colleges, workforce and economic development agencies, and individual citizens.

For more information about the WorkFirst program, visit www.workfirst.wa.gov

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Tactics

- Create a flow of information:
 - *Internal*: Keep workgroup members and the SubCabinet well informed. Periodically update talking points for workgroup members to help them stay current with developments when they discuss the Reexamination Project's work publicly.
 - *Stakeholders*: Update regularly on ongoing developments.
 - *External*: Initiate consistent and recurrent messaging about the work and successes of the WorkFirst program.
- Establish effective communication tools/vehicles
 - Regular emails to stakeholders
 - Ongoing workgroup meetings
 - Develop a website (containing reports, feedback, news, and other materials)
- Create a focused media strategy
 - Encourage news reporters, especially those on social services beats, to take an interest in the WorkFirst program and report on key recommendations.
 - Once recommendations are drafted, schedule editorial board meetings at major newspapers around the state.
- Build strategic partnerships and create a sense of involvement
 - Invest time and effort in building good relationships with key constituencies
 - Share key information with legislators, WorkFirst partners, and other stakeholders.
 - Create opportunities to receive feedback.
 - Provide public access to the workgroup via the web site that allows people to comment on the reexamination activities or make suggestions for improving the state's welfare system.

Tools/channels:

1. Stakeholder email list (ongoing)
2. Website - information clearinghouse
3. Q&A/Talking Pts - centralized responses
4. PowerPoint Presentation - messaging
5. Standard press release for publications
6. Public input meetings - credibility, consensus-building
7. Steering Committee member messaging opportunities

Key Dates	
May 12	WorkFirst SubCabinet requests permission of Gov. Gregoire to re-examine core goals, structure, and strategies to sustain Washington WorkFirst
June 7	WorkFirst SubCabinet consults with key legislators on their visions of the goals and principles of the program. SubCabinet communicates with Governor.
June 21	Memo is distributed via WorkFirst listserv describing the process of re-examining goals of the program
June 24	Email message sent to interested stakeholders describing the process
July 12	Listserv message and stakeholder email announcing Reexamination Web page, including feedback link, available at www.workfirst.wa.gov . Workgroup members
July 14	Public comment at workgroup meetings
July 25	
August 4	
Date pending	Solicit tribal input
Date pending	Solicit comments from WorkFirst parents
Date pending	Solicit comment from WorkFirst service delivery staff
Week of August 22	Stakeholder meetings scheduled to discuss workgroup's recommendations. Possible locations: Seattle, Everett, Tacoma, Olympia, Spokane, Yakima
August 25 (tentative)	Review draft recommendations from stakeholders and other interested parties. Revise as needed.
Early September	SubCabinet considers input from interested parties as recommendations and/or options are developed
Mid September	Recommendations presented to the Governor for evaluation and consideration

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Communication Method	Stakeholders							
	SubCabinet	Workgroup	State Agency Field Staff	Contractors	Tribal governments	Advocates	WorkFirst parents	Community partners
E-Mail	X	X	Agency rep	Agency rep	IPAC	X		Agency rep
Feedback loop (via email)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Meetings (comment on draft recommendations)		X			X	X	X	
Meetings (during development of recommendations)		X			X	X	X	
Web page	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
WorkFirst listserv			X	X				X
Media outreach (press releases, editorial boards)		X				X	X	X